GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:386
ANSWERED ON:20.08.2001
MINIMUM WAGES TO BEEDI WORKERS
ALE NARENDRA

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken steps to protect the Beedi workers from the exploitation by the employers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether minimum wages has been fixed for the Beedi workers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.386 FOR 20.08.2001 BY SHRI A. NARENDRA ON MINIMUM WAGES TO BEEDI WORKERS

(a) & (b): Government have enacted the Beedi & Cigar Workers (Conditionsof Employment) Act, 1966, to protect the beedi workers from exploitation of the employers. This Act regulates the conditions of employment in the beedi and cigar industry and lays down responsibilities on the employers in regard to various facilities to be provided to the beedi workers like cleanliness, sanitation, drinking water, ventilation, creches, washing facilities, first aid, canteen. It also prescribes the hours of work, wages for overtime work, interval for rest, weekly holidays, wages during leave period etc. It empowers the State Governments to frame rules in regard to various matters including on the manner in which sorting or rejection of beedis and disposal of rejected beedis is to be carried out, the fixation of maximum limit of the percentage of the rejection of beedis, manner of payment of wages, supervision by the inspectors over distribution of raw materials, settlement of disputes etc. Implementation of the above Act and the Rules made thereunder is done by the State Governments.

Also, under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, beedi making is included as a schedules employment in the State sphere. State Governments are the appropriate governments to fix and revise minimum wages and enforce payment thereof including overtime working hours, authorized deductions etc. The officers appointed as Inspectors conduct regular inspections and advise the employers to make the payment of shortfall in the event of non-payment or less payment of minimum wages. There are legal and penal actions provided in the Act against the defaulting employers.

(c) & (d): A statement showing the rates of minimum wages currently prevailing in the concerned States is enclosed at Annexure.